

REMARKS

This Application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action mailed February 4, 2003. In order to advance prosecution of this case, Applicants amend Claims 2-3, 5-6, 8-10, 14-15, 17-19, 22, and 24. Applicants cancel Claims 1 and 13 without prejudice or disclaimer, and add new Claims 26-36. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and favorable action in this case.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants note with appreciation the Examiner's indication that Claims 9-12 and 18-21 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claims 9-10 and 18-19 have been so rewritten, and Claims 11-12 and 20-21 depend on allowable Claims 9 and 18 respectively. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of Claims 9-12 and 18-21.

Section 103 Rejections

The Examiner rejects Claims 1-4, 8, 13, 15-16, 22, and 24 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 4,575,822 issued to Quate ("Quate") in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,729, 046 issued to Nishino et al. ("Nishino") and U.S. Patent No. 4,764,898 issued to Miyahara et al. ("Miyahara"). Claims 1 and 13 have been canceled and are no longer pending in the application. Applicants have amended Claims 22 and 24, and Applicants believe amended Claims 22 and 24 are allowable based on the Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter. All of the other claims depend, directly or indirectly, from claims that are allowable for at least the reasons stated above. For at least these reasons,

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of Claims 22, 24, and all other claims depending from allowable claims.

The Examiner rejects Claims 5 and 17 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Quate* in view of *Nishino*, *Miyahara* and U.S. Patent No. 6,188,920 issued to Li et al. ("*Li*"). These claims depend, directly or indirectly, from claims that are allowable for at least the reasons stated above. For at least these reasons, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of Claims 5 and 17.

The Examiner rejects Claims 6, 7, 14 and 23 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Quate* in view of *Nishino*, *Miyahara* and U.S. Patent No. 5,912,210 issued to Krusin-Elbaum et al. ("*Krusin-Elbaum*"). These claims depend, directly or indirectly, from claims that are allowable for at least the reasons stated above. For at least these reasons, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of these claims.

The Examiner rejects Claim 25 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Quate* in view of *Nishino*, *Miyahara* and U.S. Patent No. 6,211,673 issued to Gerber et al. ("*Gerber*"). Claim 25 depends from Claim 24, which is allowable for at least the reasons stated above. For at least that reason, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and allowance of Claim 25.

New Claims:

Applicants add Claims 26-36, which are fully supported by the specification as originally filed. Claims 26-36 all depend, directly or indirectly, from claims that are allowable

for at least the reasons stated above. Applicants, therefore, respectfully request consideration and allowance of the new claims.

Conclusions

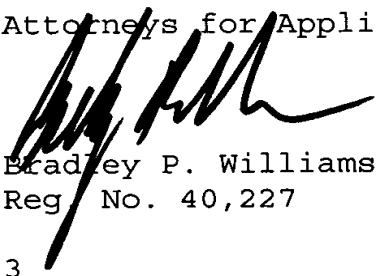
Applicants have made an earnest attempt to place this case in condition for allowance. For the foregoing reasons, and for other reasons clearly apparent, Applicants respectfully request full allowance of all pending Claims. If the Examiner feels that a telephone conference or an interview would advance prosecution of this Application in any manner, the undersigned attorney for Applicants stands ready to conduct such a conference at the convenience of the Examiner.

If there are matters that can be discussed by telephone to further the prosecution of this application, a telephone call to the undersigned is encouraged.

The three-month extension fee \$465.00 is enclosed. An additional fee of \$165.00 is enclosed for two (2) independent claims and seven (7) dependent claims. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any extra fees or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 02-0384 of Baker Botts L.L.P.

Respectfully submitted,

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